



# SHAPING THE FUTURE

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Five-Year Plan for the  
Community Colleges of Iowa

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2006-2011



State of Iowa  
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Grimes State Office Building  
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Research shows that education pays.  
American Association of Community Colleges 2006

## Introduction

This strategic plan is the second “Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Community Colleges of Iowa” as mandated by the General Assembly in its 2000 legislative session. The original plan was the outcome of the Legislature’s 1999 Community College Governance Study that reaffirmed the existing governance structure, emphasizing 15 locally elected boards with oversight and coordination by the State Board of Education and the Community College Council.

On March 30, 2006, the State Board of Education approved the revised strategic plan and directed that performance indicators be utilized in measuring the accomplishments of the five strategic goals. Performance indicators will be used beginning with the August 2006 Annual Report and in all subsequent years.

As specified by Iowa Code, the plan has been reviewed and updated with the assistance of the Stakeholders Working Group and will be in effect from July 1, 2006, through June 30, 2011.

# *the* VISION

The community colleges of Iowa will excel in meeting the individual learning and diverse community needs of Iowa, in preparing the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce, and in growing Iowa and its economy.

**It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time."**

Margery Williams

# *the* MISSION

The mission of the community colleges of Iowa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to provide exemplary educational and community services to meet the needs and enhance the lives of Iowans.

**With each advance in technology and increase in complexity of services, you need an even higher level of skills to do the new job.**

Thomas Friedman, [The World Is Flat](#), 2005

# *the* **VALUES**

**Overarching Value:** The right of all Iowans to achieve their full potential through quality education.

## **1. Access and Opportunity**

- Maintaining an open-door policy.
- Proactively aid and enhance student educational success.
- Accessibility of high quality community college programs and services in all areas of Iowa.
- Affordability of education and training to all citizens.
- Accessibility to lifelong learning opportunities.
- Meeting the needs of students, including those of diverse racial and ethnic groups and diverse educational needs.

**"Plan to be better tomorrow than today, but don't plan to be finished."**

Carol Ann Tomlinson, U.S. Educator

## **2. Responsiveness**

- Flexibility in response to economic change, population changes, technological advances, and the changing needs of business and industry in a global context.

### **3. Collaborative Relationships**

- Among community colleges to strengthen programs and services.
- With all educational sectors—public and private, K-12, area education agencies and postsecondary—to enhance the transition and success of students across levels.
- With business, industry, and community organizations such as area economic development groups and chambers of commerce, to build Iowa’s economy.
- With and among governmental agencies to use resources effectively.

### **4. Community and Civic Responsibility**

- Assistance to local communities to address their needs, including leadership development, citizenship education, civility, ethical behavior and responsibility.
- Understanding of diversity and respect for other cultures.

### **5. Local Control and Shared Responsibility**

- Informed decisions that address both local and state needs in a global context.
- Communication to local and state constituents of institutional results, success and return on investment.

# *the* **ROLE AND SCOPE**

The community colleges of Iowa offer a wide range of programs and services designed to meet the educational, economic, and community needs of Iowa's citizens.

## **COLLEGE CREDIT PROGRAMS**

Iowa's 15 community colleges provide a wide array of arts and sciences, career and technical associate degrees, and diploma and certificate programs.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Continuing education programs provide workers with up-to-date skills to meet the ongoing needs of Iowa's business and industry. Courses are also designed to meet the personal educational needs of local citizens and the community.

## **SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS**

Increasing numbers of high school students and teachers are served through tech prep programs, career academies, early enrollment in community college courses, and alternative high schools.

**Among all jobs in the U.S. economy, those requiring associate degrees are projected to increase the fastest, by 32 percent through 2010.**

Hans Meeder & James R. Couch, "Where Are The Good Jobs?" in Career Pathways: Education with a purpose, September 2005.

# *the* **ROLE AND**

# **SCOPE** continued

## **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Community colleges assist students in gaining the skills necessary to enter and succeed in college-level programs.

## **ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

A wide array of services is available to assist adults in need of basic skills training. These include Adult Basic Education, English Language Learners, and several literacy programs and GED programs.

## **STUDENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

A wide range of support and development services is available. These include comprehensive assessments of interests, skills and abilities to assist in career planning; academic counseling; student activity and leadership development programs; and job placement services.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

Iowa's community colleges collaborate to provide pivotal services to business and industry that enable them to respond quickly to the changing economy. These include customized training programs designed for them and assistance to local communities in their economic development activities.

# STRATEGIC GOALS

The community colleges of Iowa will:

1. Provide high quality, comprehensive educational programs and services accessible to all Iowans.
2. Develop high-skilled workers to meet the demands of Iowa's economy.
3. Maximize financial and human resources to assure provision of comprehensive community college services to Iowans and to allow Iowa to compete on a national and international level.
4. Demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency for achieving the system mission and goals.
5. Recruit, enroll, and retain to completion or graduation persons of underrepresented groups and recruit and retain persons from minority racial/ethnic groups in faculty and administrative roles.

Community college students want to learn things that will have a positive effect on their lives. They want college to be nearby with convenient class schedules and low cost. Legislators want measurement of effectiveness. Employers want workers with analytical and technical skills. Taxpayers want to make sure their money is well spent.

American Association of Community Colleges, 2006

# STRATEGIC GOALS

*Goal #1: The community colleges of Iowa will provide high quality, comprehensive educational programs and services accessible to all Iowans.*

**Initiatives:**

- A. Establish programs and services to meet constituent needs through ongoing assessment and evaluation.
- B. Improve articulation of career/technical and arts and sciences programs across Iowa's education system (K-12, community colleges, independent colleges, and state universities) and collaborate to resolve articulation barriers in order to move toward a seamless education system.
- C. Develop and expand partnerships between local community colleges, other educational entities, K-12 districts, business, industry, workforce, economic development, and other state and federal agencies.

Everyone should have a chance to be educated beyond high school.

Thomas Friedman, *The World Is Flat*, 2005

*Goal #1: The community colleges of Iowa will provide high quality, comprehensive educational programs and services accessible to all Iowans.*

**Continued**

- D. Partner, as requested, with K-12 districts that provide alternative high school education as a means of providing greater opportunities for students.
- E. Expand programs to meet the needs of Iowans of all ages for developmental education, job training and retraining, and mandatory adult and community education in order to prepare them for success in education, the workplace, and the community.
- F. Provide comprehensive faculty and staff development opportunities on learning, teaching, technology, and leadership.
- G. Sustain and advance the reputation of the community colleges of Iowa for excellence in teaching and learning.

...the illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Alan Toffler, Futurist

*Goal #2: The community colleges of Iowa will develop high-skilled workers to meet the demands of Iowa's economy.*

**Initiatives:**

- A. Secure funding for development, equipment, and implementation of career and technology-based programs that have industry based standards to ensure graduates possess the necessary credentials for success in the workplace.
- B. Increase the delivery of entrepreneurship programs and services that prepare Iowans to establish and grow their own enterprises.
- C. Prioritize the addition or expansion of programs and courses to those directly related to high-skill high-wage careers in advanced manufacturing, information solutions, and life sciences and high demand occupations documented by regional and state employment studies.
- D. Continue to support a single point-of-contact process to serve business and industries needing specific training programs delivered through multiple community colleges.
- E. Develop a recruitment program to encourage students both in and out of Iowa to enroll in occupations identified in the Skills 2006 Surveys and subsequent regional and statewide needs assessments.

*"As the world becomes more inter-connected organizations that will truly excel in the future will be (those)...that discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn."*

Peter Senge, "The Fifth Discipline"

*Goal #3: The community colleges of Iowa will maximize financial and human resources to assure provision of comprehensive community college services to Iowans and to allow Iowa to compete on a national and international level.*

**Initiatives:**

- A. Develop and implement an effective and coordinated strategy to achieve adequate funding.
- B. Secure sufficient funds to keep tuition at levels low enough to maximize educational access for students of all income levels.
- C. Restore the balance of funding, which supports community colleges through state and local revenue and student tuition.
- D. Develop a compensation package for community college faculty and professional staff salaries to be commensurate with the national average within five years.
- E. Seek support from business and industry for program development and student assistance.
- F. Seek support for professional development for faculty and staff.
- G. Expand the impact of business and industry advising groups on their related programs.

**"To be a teacher you must be a prophet – because you are trying to prepare people for a world thirty to fifty years into the future."**

Gordon Brown, MIT

*Goal #4: The community colleges of Iowa will demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency for achieving the system mission and goals.*

**Initiatives:**

- A. Develop a set of agreed-upon performance indicators common to all community colleges.
- B. Continue to collect, verify, analyze, and publish meaningful community college information through the use of the MIS system.
- C. Collect one- and five-year implementation plans and annual accomplishments related to the statewide Strategic Plan from each community college and issue a statewide annual report.
- D. Identify, recognize and reward best practices and activities, which address the goals and initiatives of this plan.
- E. Foster Continuous Quality Improvement.
- F. Communicate effectively with the public on the success and value of Iowa's community colleges.

**"The pathway to educational excellence lies within each school."**

Terrance Deal

*Goal #5: The community colleges of Iowa will recruit, enroll, retain to completion or graduation persons of underrepresented groups in all programs. Recruit and retain persons from minority racial/ethnic groups in faculty and administrative roles.*

**Initiatives:**

- A. Implement activities and services provided by the college and in the community that increase awareness of the importance of gender equity and ethnic diversity as it relates to the social and economic development of communities in a global society.
- B. Implement strategies to increase the awareness of K-12 students as to the opportunities available through careers that are non-traditional for their gender.
- C. Increase collaborative efforts among community colleges, school districts, and community based programs to target potential students in underrepresented populations (including persons from minority racial/ethnic groups, men and women in careers non-traditional for their gender, individuals with disabilities, the incarcerated, welfare participants, single parents and displaced homemakers, older and immigrant workers, and high school dropouts) in order to prepare them to be more productive workers.

***Goal #5: The community colleges of Iowa will recruit, enroll, retain to completion or graduation persons of under-represented groups in all programs. Recruit and retain persons from minority racial/ethnic groups in faculty and administrative roles. Continued***

- D. Replicate, enhance, and/or design exemplary programs to increase women and persons from minority racial/ethnic groups in leadership and faculty positions in collaboration with school districts, higher education, and business/industry and community based organizations.
- E. Design and implement retention strategies and opportunities to ensure that the faculty and staff meet the needs of underrepresented populations by utilizing research-based best practices and continuous assessment
- F. Strengthen support systems that increase successful transfer and/or employment of persons from minority racial/ethnic groups and non-traditional students.
- G. Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies designed to reduce disparities in enrollment, retention, and graduation by gender and racial/ethnic background.
- H. Evaluate effectiveness of strategies to recruit and retain persons from minority racial/ethnic groups in faculty and administrative roles.

# STAKEHOLDERS

# WORKING

# GROUP

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